

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

2024 Newsletter # 1 March

edited by Phil Childs

www.nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com

See us on Facebook



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1. *Table of Contents, Board of NVHS, total solar eclipse coming 4.8.2024*
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12. *Join Us.*



MAINE, NY !

Hello Members,

2023 was an amazing year for the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society. Members and Volunteers generously contributed to help us with some major undertakings; like the repair and stabilization of Pitcher's Mill, the Town of Maine's Demisemiseptcentennial Celebration and the rehabilitation of the J. Ralph Ingalls School. We also managed to hold coffeehouses, monthly programs, book sales, a mini-Maine Fest, Barn-Quilting classes, Square Dance lessons and concerts.



Co-Presidents **Gordie Gottlieb and Joanne Weir**

We are happy to announce that Pitcher's Mill will be open for tours again this year and J. Ralph Ingalls will soon be able to provide a space for community use and events. I think you will be astounded when you see what is happening inside J. Ralph Ingalls! We are finishing installation of all new LED lighting in the school as well as repair of the stage, and painting of the gym. It was cold inside the school this year, but an amazing crew of volunteers led by Bill Austin, Bill and Lynn Ross, and Kerin Flannery kept us moving and I can't wait for people to see what the team of volunteers has accomplished. I'd like to thank Dennis Mitchell for all his guidance, knowledge, and support. He has advised us and supported Mike McKilligan's goal of turning J. Ralph into a community center for the town.

We appreciate all the support you have given us, and we hope you will be astounded by our 2024 plans. For a small historical society to maintain 5 sites is an accomplishment, but we aren't stopping at site maintenance. Over the next few weeks, we will be publishing our 2024 event calendar. Please watch our website (<https://nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com>), email announcements, and our Facebook pages for upcoming 2024 events.

We want to teach the community as much as we can about the history of the Nanticoke Valley, so we'll be rolling out more fun ways to do this such as games and puzzles on our website. We hope you will enjoy them and learn from the games and presentations.

I'm also pleased to announce that we will be offering a new book from photographer, author and historian Phil Childs called "*Images from a Small Town – Maine, NY 1880's - 2023*" supported by a grant from the Broome County Arts Council.



All of this would not be possible without memberships, volunteers, and sponsors. If you haven't renewed your membership for 2024 you can return the form in this newsletter or go to the Membership page on our website at: <https://nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com/become-a-member>

Thank you,
Gordie

On the next page is the text of a letter which Dr. Leale wrote to our Dr. Dwight Dudley May 28, 1865 concerning Lincoln's death and subsequent execution of the conspirators. This letter now belongs to the Shappell Manuscript Foundation. For more information about Dr. Leale check: Charles A. Leale – The First Doctor to Aid Lincoln Following the Assassination – Civil War Profiles



“Charles Augustus Leale (March 26, 1842 – June 13, 1932) was a surgeon in the Union Army during the American Civil War^[1] and the first doctor to arrive at the presidential box at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865, after John Wilkes Booth fatally shot President Abraham Lincoln in the head. His prompt treatment allowed Lincoln to live until the next morning. Leale continued to serve in the army until 1866, after which he returned to his home town of New York City where he established a successful private practice and became involved in charitable medical care. One of the last surviving witnesses to Lincoln's death, Leale died in 1932 at the age of 90.”

Charles Leale - Wikipedia Note A. Lincoln Feb. 12, 1809—Apr 15, 1865 age 56.

"Armory Square"
U.S.A. Gen. Hospital
Washington D.C.
May 28th 1865
Dear Friend Dudley

Your last came safely[.] You will please excuse me for not answering it sooner as I have been very busy. As you noticed I am in the volunteer service. There were no vacancies in the regular army. and [sic] after having been examined for seven days by three old army surgeons I was accepted. and [sic] have been on duty since at this hospital. When I first came I had charge of all the sick and wounded officers which duty I fulfilled until about two weeks ago when I was appointed Executive Officer and am at present in charge [.] I had charge of the President until his family physician arrived. That night was the only time that I have been to the Theatre since I came here and then partly to see Mr. Lincoln and Gen Grant. I took a seat in the Dress Circle near the President's Box saw Booth enter the box heard the report of the pistol then saw him jump from the box with his draw[n] dagger and rush across [sic] the stage I immediately ran to the box and there saw the President sitting in the arm chair with his head thrown back on one side was Mrs. L. and on the other Miss Harris The former was holding his head and crying bitterly for a Surgeon while the others there were standing crying for Stimulant water etc not one going for anything. While going towards him I sent one for Brandy and another for Water, then told Mrs. L. that I was a surgeon. When she asked me to do what I could he was then in a profound Coma, pulse could not be felt, eyes closed, stertorous breathing. I immediately with assistance placed him in a recumbent position on the floor. While doing this I put my hand on a part of his coat near the left shoulder saturated with blood, supposing him to have been stabbed. I asked a person near by to cut off his clothes which he did with a jack knife. as soon as his shoulder was laid bare and no wound discovered I examined his head and first felt a protuberance about one inch to the right of mid line and the same distance above the superior curved line of the occiput. I removed the clot and introduced the little finger of left hand completely through the cranium I then knew it was fatal and told the bystanders that it was a mortal wound. Dr. Taft and Dr. King now came in and we removed him immediately to Pattersons [sic] house just opposite. I first intended to have him taken immediately to the White House but I was affraid [sic] he would die while going there. Besides after he was taken out to the street his carriage was not to be found. After we put him in bed we sent for bottles of hot water to apply to his extremities before these arrived the room was completely crowded. I turned around and I saw a Capt. who I asked to have the room cleared which he did. which he did [sic] all leaving except Mrs. L. and Miss Harris. I went to Mrs. L. and asked her if she would have the kindness to go to the next room for a minute so as to allow us to do all we could and examine his wounds. she [sic] did so and several Drs. then came in among them Dr. Stone the family physician who was introduced to me. When I asked him if he would take charge of the President he said that he would when I resigned. The Surg Gen. Surg Crane and others now came in. I then went to the head of the bed near his left shoulder where I remained until he breathed his last. he [sic] was completely insensible from the time that he was shot until he breathed his last. They tried to give him a small quantity of brandy but he could not swallow it. Mustard Poultices were applied during the night. I had a ticket to the Green Room and had the carriage next to the Surg. General at the Funeral.

The trial of the conspirators is going on. I went to see them last week at the Court room they are a very inferior looking set of men. Dr. Mudd is the only one that has any intellectual expressions (I hope that if the charges are true against him he will be unable to tell what school he recv'd his Dip[loma] from) they all look as if they did not have any hope O'Laughlin is very nervous and trembles terribly they are all very pale except the Dr. The review that took place here last week was the grandest military collection ever witnessed on the continent the soldiers were as black as indians [sic] and covered with dust. I had tickets sent to me for seats on the stand next to the Presidents where I saw very well. I recv'd a letter from Dr. Gov. Smith last week he is still at Ladies Home hosp't. NY. where both of us have had fever.

Allow me to congratulate you on your happy prospect in the future.

Please remember me to the Tylers[,] Dr. [illegible] and all inquiring friends and believe me

Yours sincerely,

CHAS. A. LEALE "



Letter written by Dr. Charles Leale - Shappell Manuscript Foundation — [Google Arts & Culture](#)

What going back to school was like when we were kids!

By **Sylvia Ward**

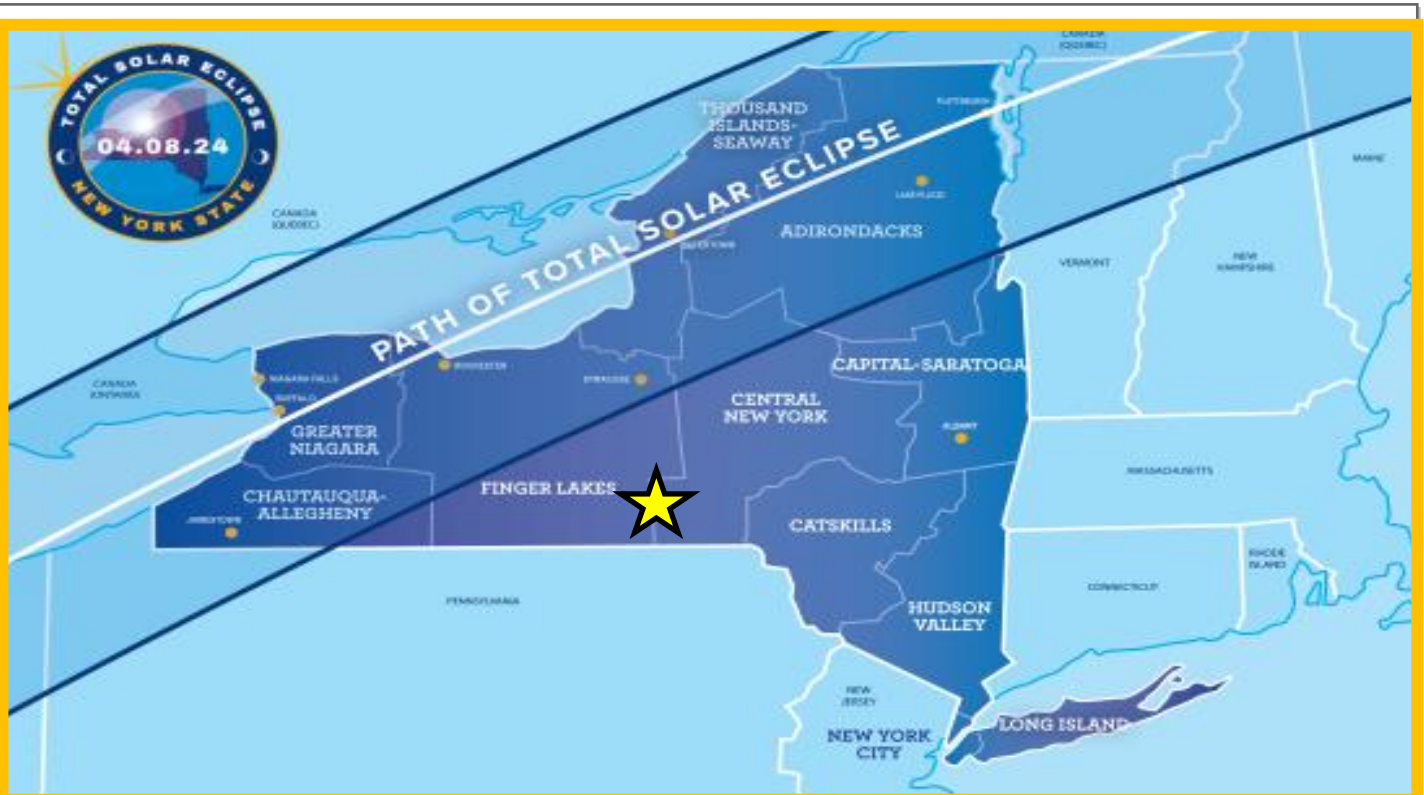
What going back to school was like when we were kids! Oh my goodness compared to today? Pretty simplistic. Girls wore dresses back then, so a crisp new red plaid dress was in order. If you were lucky new shoes were added. If you didn't outgrow your shoes, the ones from last year would do. But to get new saddle shoes with new Bobbie socks would complete the first day of school outfit. No doubt this outfit would do for school pictures too. Now getting to supplies, loose leaf notebook, filler lined paper, ruler, one notebook and pencil and eraser! I don't remember back packs. Cursive was taught back then, and there was a little hole in the right hand corner of the desk, assuming everyone was right handed! But the ink bottle would be held in that handy hole in the desk. We had pens yep! They were a plastic instrument that held the nib that had to be repeatedly dipped into that ink. If the ink spilled or smeared your paper, no eraser was invented to fix it. If it got on your fingers and inadvertently smeared your face, you would've sure to be snickered at. If you got it on your clothes, you could be sure to get lectured of how hard your parents worked to buy you that nice dress! Oh, but technology progressed! They invented a pen with a little lever that got pulled out and the little rubber reservoir would hold your ink for you. Your pen could take you much further without interruption. Oh, it gets better, I'm not sure what grade it was, that the ballpoint pen came into existence, but we knew no limits to what could be done. Little did we know what the future would hold!

We were most fortunate at Maine Central School, aka J R Ingalls. Wonderful caring dedicated teachers they were, now slipped into our memories forever. Mrs. Crockett had a clothing store right in town (now part of Frank's restaurant). Those God-awful one-piece blue gym suits, that were required, could conveniently be bought at Mary Crockett's store. That beautiful building housed the gym quarters down in the basement, "Girls" on one side "Boys" on the other was embedded on the outside over the doors leading down to the gym showers and changing lockers. Oh yes and showers, a little splash on the shoulders, bare feet in the communal foot powder bin and Mrs. Crockett would check your name off as you yelled "shower".

Mrs. Spencer was our home economics teacher. I could write a whole book on her. I loved her class. We sewed a gathered skirt in 7th, blouse in 8th and a dress in 9th. Which included the grand finale of a fashion show and the end of the year! Can you imagine how she must of kept her composure, with that many girls and teaching them to sew straight. Not to mention keeping their shoe box supplies in order and put back in the cubby hole when they were done. But the only time I remember her "losing it" was, when she had two girls (you know who you are) stay after school to make special sugar cut out cookies for the facility tea at the end of the week. Well, the girls had let their taste testing get away from them. Yep, their baking was so tasty they did not stop. Cookies all devoured and consequences to face. I think everybody in that school heard about that dirty deed. Mrs. Spencer's exclamation of "oh horrors" was repeated over and over. And Mrs. Spencer's husband, Mr. Spencer taught history. He too was a colorful character. He got the name "Charlie pill box". I'm not sure why but I believe he had a throat condition and coughed quite a bit. He would nonchalantly bring up a tin and slip a pill to calm the persistent cough. A small group of us joined his "Jr. Historical Club" we would make note of the locals and lug the giant reel to reel recorder to make a record of what life was like so long ago. He took us to Cooperstown for the day one Saturday. It was fun to get to know him in a relaxed fun setting, far away from the ridged classroom. But then he was quick with his knowledge to give us a personal guided tour. And who could forget Dorothy Raftis, with the Bunsen burners and the different bubbling glass beakers ready to stretch your mind into the unknown experiments. (continued)

Sylvia continued: I loved lunch time. I always bought my lunch, those lunch ladies cooked tasty wholesome lunches. Mac-n-Cheese with beets was my favorite. Next Spanish rice, and unforgettable tomato soup and toasted cheese. The gov. supplemented butter and cheese made the best sandwiches. We could buy a small 5 cent cup of ice cream with a wooden spoon that felt like it wanted to stick to your tongue, as we savored the sweet ending. Lunch time was always noisy, we would be wound up good before recess, to get rid of all that excess energy.

I could go on forever, maybe more another time. I can only hope this generation (our grandchildren) can not only get the best education, but they too can cherish their memories of school days, like I have. Wishing the best for them, as they grow learn and remember. Sylvia Ward · Sept 8 2021



LOCATION	PARTIAL ECLIPSE BEGINS	FULL ECLIPSE BEGINS	FULL ECLIPSE ENDS	PARTIAL ECLIPSE ENDS
Jamestown	2:03:38 PM	3:17:55 PM	3:20:46 PM	4:31:43 PM
Buffalo	2:04:56 PM	3:18:20 PM	3:22:06 PM	4:32:10 PM
Rochester	2:07:00 PM	3:20:06 PM	3:23:47 PM	4:33:26 PM
Syracuse	2:09:01 PM	3:23:03 PM	3:24:30 PM	4:34:49 PM
Watertown	2:10:05 PM	3:22:33 PM	3:26:12 PM	4:35:01 PM
Plattsburgh	2:14:03 PM	3:25:44 PM	3:29:18 PM	4:37:07 PM

THIS AND THAT!!!!



In January Betty Welch reached her 100th birthday. She has been a Maine resident her entire life and has been the unofficial historian of the town. Her family threw a celebration for her on January 20th where hundreds of her friends attended. In her home you can see her own historical library of Maine. She has added so much to the NVHS over the years. .

In the 1950's a row of trees were planted on the south side of Lewis St. This month NYSE&G removed them, deeming them be a hazard to the power lines . This project continues today with the "trimming" of trees throughout the community. The photo to the right shows a cross section of an oak tree that was on Lewis St. The other 8 trees along this stretch were sugar maples. The NVHS has contacted the town suggesting to start a committee to investigate what can be done to turn Maine back into a tree lined community. The committee chair is Maine council person Art Robinson who is in charge of this very important task. The NVHS will work hand in hand with the town planning for the green future of the town. Perhaps you would like to be part of this committee contact Mr. Robinson robinson@townofmaine.org.



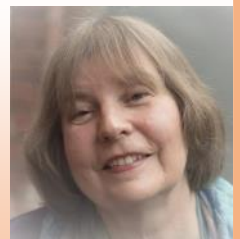
Curator's Corner

This winter has been quiet at the museum as the bulk of activity has been happening down the road at J Ralph. This spring will see some effort being put into cleaning and painting our meeting room and updating the exhibit in the middle room. We love help! If you'd like to lend a hand, please contact me at (607) 239-1020 or by email at jweir551@gmail.com.

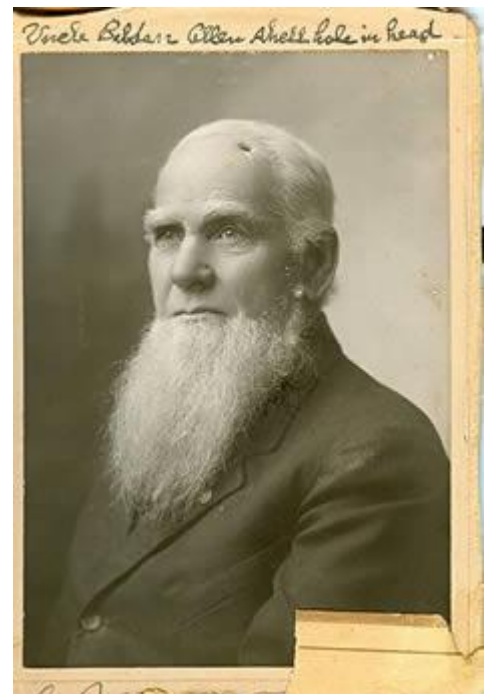
Joanne Weir, Curator

Rob Szczepanski Highway Supervisor of the town of Maine is announcing the town dump day Saturday May 4th 8am to 4pm. Rules and the official announcement will be found later on the town of Maine website <https://townofmaine.org>

Sandy Rozek is developing a book club for the NVHS. She is working with local author and former teacher at Maine Memorial Elementary school **Joan Koster**. They will have details soon. About Joan " I am an educator, ethnographer, fiber artist, and award-winning author of thrilling historical fiction about forgotten women, adventurous romances, and Write for Success books for everyone. I love hats, cats, and sharing what I know."



A project in the works is working towards the printing of a book on the *Soldiers of the Civil War from Maine, Nanticoke and Lisle*. John T. Goodnough, Corresponding Secretary Binghamton Civil War Roundtable and Daryl Holloway are working with town historian Susan Lisk, NVHS president Gordie Gottlieb, Nanticoke resident and historian Dick Baldwin and myself. The over 300 individuals who served in the Civil War in our region, each have a story, that we hope is not lost after this book is published. One example of our local veteran is Belden Allen. Photo and information was found in "Find A Grave" website. Look closely at his forehead. Yep that's a bullet hole, he was wounded in Virginia.



25 years old upon enlistment.
 Enlisted on 8/27/1862 at Maine, NY as a Private.
 On 8/27/1862 he mustered into "E" Co. NY 50th Engineers
 He was Mustered Out on 6/13/1865 at Fort Barry, VA
 He was listed as:
 * Wounded 5/6/1864 (place not stated)
 Promotions:
 * Artificer
 * Corpl 10/1/1864

"ALLEN, BELDEN.—Age, 25 years. Enlisted, August 27, 1862, at Maine; mustered in as private, Co. E, August 27, 1862, to serve three years; wounded, May 6, 1864; promoted artificer, date not stated; corporal, October 1, 1864; mustered out with company, June 13, 1865, at Fort Barry, Va." [Octave Bruso Diary: May 6, 1864 \(beyondthecrater.com\)](#) Note the bullet wound on his forehead.

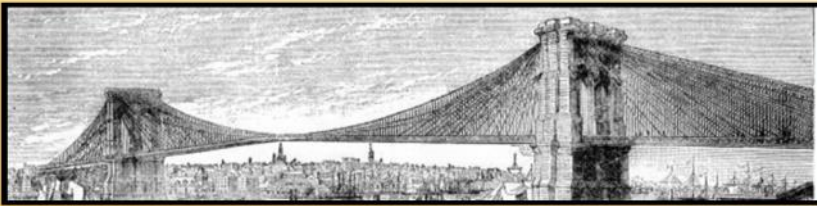
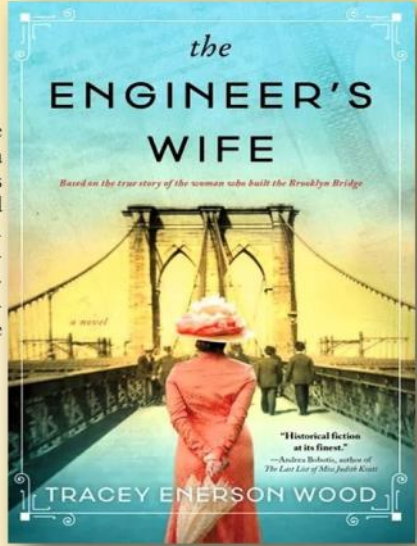
Calling all book lovers!
The Nanticoke Valley Historical Society will be hosting our first historical book club
Tuesday, April 9 at 6:00 PM.
We will begin by reading and discussing *The Engineer's Wife* by Tracey Emerson Wood

Please note that, going forward, future book selections and the frequency of the meetings will be determined by the members of the book club.

It is available new and used on [Amazon.com](#) (and other book sellers) and is available for download in both audio and eBook from several libraries. Please join us for an evening of discussion and refreshments at our museum located at 13 Nanticoke Road, Maine, NY.

Please RSVP by April 7 and direct any questions to nvhsmaineny@gmail.com or sjrozek@aol.com
 Phone 607 239 8868

Book summary from GoodReads: "Emily Roebling refuses to live conventionally—she knows who she is and what she wants, and she's determined to make change. But then her husband asks the unthinkable: give up her dreams to make his possible. Emily's fight for women's suffrage is put on hold, and her life transformed when her husband Washington Roebling, the Chief Engineer of the Brooklyn Bridge, is injured on the job. Untrained for the task, but under his guidance, she assumes his role, despite stern resistance and overwhelming obstacles. But as the project takes shape under Emily's direction, she wonders whose legacy she is building—hers, or her husband's. As the monument rises, Emily's marriage, principles, and identity threaten to collapse. When the bridge finally stands finished, will she recognize the woman who built it?"



Old Bridge Southerland's Gulf, Maine, N. Y.

Around 1900 “home made” postcards became very popular. The card to the left, provided by Betty Welch is labeled “ Old bridge Sutherland Gulch, Maine NY. We would like your help in adding to the back story of this card. Where was this photograph taken?

Do you have any “old” photos of Maine to share? I so let Phil Childs know.

Looking back at 100 years in Maine

"I loved Maine and I still do, but it has changed so much."

By [Erin Lawlor](#)

Published: Jan. 16, 2024 at 3:58 PM EST

MAINE (WBNG) -- Have you ever wondered what it was like to live 100 years ago? For one Town of Maine resident, Betty Welch, she doesn't have to wonder because she lived it.

Welch is celebrating her 100th birthday and 100th year in the Town of Maine.

"I loved Maine and I still do, but it has changed so much," Welch said.

Welch was one of the students to attend the four-classroom school in Maine, had eight kids in her graduating class at Union-Endicott, was one of the first grades to attend Maine-Endwell, saw the first Catholic church come to town and only had four stores growing up.

"There was so much going on that it is unbelievable that it all phased out," Welch said. "When I was a teenager it was IBM and EJ'S. They were the big things that everyone went down to."

One of her favorite memories is being in the Town Band, which Welch told 12 News is one of the oldest town bands in the country.

Welch played in the band for 40 years, even through World War II.

"I enjoyed it," Welch said. "And still when I see the town band, I get a thrill. Just saw the name. I'm glad it's carried on so far."

Welch served as Post Master at the Post Office for many years. She said she was proud to work for the Postal Service and thoroughly enjoyed her time there.

"I worked during Christmas time one year and it was the most fun. I love to sort mail," Welch said. "And I'd sit there and sort mail. We did thousands of letters and they would come over the intercom saying how many letters we did. And I just loved it."

In terms of advice Welch would give with 100 years of wisdom: Count your Blessings. She said she recently started to count her blessings after telling everyone else to do so and she has recognized a lot of good coming from it.

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Ode to Betty

(sung to the Tune of "Bicycle Built for Two")

Words by Hilary Rozek

Betty, Betty, 100 years with you
All throughout town, we can see signs of you
You **put** smiles on many faces
And **lived** in many places
Through**out** the town, the hamlet's found
They are **so** deeply fond of you

In the **1930's** you made ice cream with your 'bro
To **sell** at baseball games, to make a little dough
Next to the four-room school there
The **kids** would come for their share
The **thoughts** you had were always glad
As you **planned** where you next would go.

In the 40's a new job would come to you
Right in Endicott not far from the EJ shoe
You **took** a job at the A & P
The **spot** to get your groceries
You **always** worked so hard but still
You made **time** for a family too~

Next on your plate, the post office called to you
Post **Mistress** Betty, Glen Aubrey and town of Maine too
You **spent** many years a-workin'
No **duty** ever shirkin'
No **matter** the task they just had to ask
Friend or **foe** you served equally too

You and Leo wanted to brighten the town
So you painted the sign on the side of the barn
Of the **mill** during restoration, Pancake **flour** sign creation
You **freshened** it up, just you and your hub
Volun**teer**ing your time all around

But your greatest achievement could be declared
Your three children, and all of the love you've shared
You **never** sought out the glory but **giving** was your story,
Your **time** you've spent well, the story they'll tell
of the **people** for whom you have cared.

Betty, Betty, 100 years with you
All throughout town, we can see signs of you
You **put** smiles on many faces
And **lived** in many places
Through**out** the town, the hamlet's found
They are **so** deeply fond of you!

IN MEMORIAM



Joyce Barnes Jackson
1930—2023
Brian W. Kirkpatrick
1945—2024
Philip Carl Parr
1940—2023



Moulton Norton Baldwin Brown
Avery Reester Lawton Walters

Thanks to Dick Baldwin for sharing this photograph from 1931 of the Maine team.
Visit us when Chuck Gunther does a presentation on the Baseball History of Maine.

Upcoming programs...

Schedule of Events for Nanticoke Valley Historical Society of Maine NY

Here are the programs in place:

- **Monday March 18**, 6:30 PM at the museum 13 Nanticoke Road.: Christine Clifton-Kendall along with Phil Childs will lead the discussion on the *Green-space project* in Maine
- **Tuesday April 9th** 6 PM RSVP April 7th see page book club event
- **Monday April 15** 6:30 PM : Claudia Baker and Barb Snyder of BC Stitchers will present on the Hearts for Hospice Program for Mercy House in our community. This will include instructions and the opportunity to take home materials to make a heart for the program. We are also planning on a follow-up workshop activity to include vintage types of stitchery into this project - perhaps creating a red work or cross stitch piece to pass on the historic nature of gathering to create needlework together.

Future Programs

- We are hoping to have a presentation on bee-keeping for May with another workshop type of piece for a garden home to attract bees.
- The history of the Gates/Gunsalus house
- The history of baseball in the town of Maine as researched by Chuck Gunther and Sue Lisk
- A Roaring Twenties event to carry-out our pre-depression museum timeline (location{s}, time and details to be arranged)
- "Pitcher's Mill to Glen Aubrey" travel along NYS Route 26 to see what it was like in the 1800s. Phil Childs will be presenting this program later this year.
- Mainefest and Plein Air event Sat. Sept. 14 at J. Ralph
- Look for Coffee House dates
- Broome County Art Trail in October
- Help us when we have student visitations.
- Picnics

Sandy Rozek is our programs organizer. If you would like to present to NVHS this year contact her. If you know of some presentation that might be a great



The Pitcher twin girls Inas and Inah along with their mother Annie Zimmer Pitcher in the front of their home ca. 1910.

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society,

PO Box 75, Maine, NY 13802

March 2024 Volume #1

Renew Your Membership Today

Name: _____ Date _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip : _____

Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Newsletter: Mailed (Add \$5:00) or Electronic

Dues: _____ Individual \$25.00 _____ Family \$35.00

_____ Senior/Student \$20.00 _____ Patron \$50.00

_____ Business \$100.00 _____ Donation

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society, PO Box 75, Maine, NY 13802

Save a stamp and renew online <https://nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com/become-a-member>